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UPDATED: Man accused of pretending to be trooper

KEITH WHITCOMB JR., Staff Writer
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Editor's Note: Justin Gamache pleaded guilty to impersonation of a public officer, a misdemeanor, on Dec. 30, 2013. He was sentenced to go before the reparative board and the court was notified of his completion of the program on Feb. 11, 2014.

BENNINGTON -- A Readsboro man is accused of leaving a message on his neighbor's answering machine pretending to be a state trooper and claiming he was wanted for a sex crime.

Justin Gamache, 30, of Tunnel Street, pleaded not guilty Monday in Vermont Superior Court to a misdemeanor charge of impersonating a public officer. He was released under the condition he have no contact with his neighbor, Joseph Mangiacotti.

According to an affidavit by State Police Trooper Lauren Ronan, on Aug. 22 Mangiacotti contacted police to say his neighbor, Gamache, had left a message on his phone pretending to be a trooper stating, "This is the Vermont State Police, you have been warned. We are going to give you a warning if you do not contact us by 6 a.m. we will be coming your house. We have a complaint against you touching little girls at the Readsboro Pre-school and if you do not respond we will come to your house and we will arrest you and this is being notified to your landlord, thank you."

Ronan wrote that it was clearly not a trooper who left the message, which was recorded Aug. 17 at 9:30 p.m. Mangiacotti told Ronan that he and Gamache used to be friends, but Gamache had started accusing him of peering into Gamache's windows. Mangiacotti played a Youtube video featuring what he said was Gamache's voice, which matched the one on the phone message.

Gamache admitted to leaving the message, saying he was tired of the window peering and also accused Mangiacotti of following children around with a camera.

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